

December 13, 2002

TALON



**104th Cavalry Apache Troop rakes
in bountiful crop during 'Harvest'**

Inside this issue:

**Exercise Joint Resolve demonstrates readiness
French Marines, U.S. grunts patrol for peace**

Task Force Eagle www.tfeagle.army.mil

Word on the street...

“Since today is Friday the 13th, what sort of superstitions do you have?”

TALON

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Capt. Nina Dipinto
OIC Vet Services
422nd Med Det. (VS)

“When I was in vet school, I always wore the same set of clothes for exams.”



CW3 Robert McKinstry
Apache Pilot
1-183rd Avn.

“I never pick pennies up off the ground because it will bring bad luck.”



Spc. Gregory Hutchins
Medical Maintenance Tech.
145th Med Log. Det. 1

“When I’m taking a PT test I mismatch my socks. It’s worked so far because I’ve never failed a PT test.”



Ed Winters
Recreation Specialist
MWR

“When I am playing in a sports tournament, I won’t change my socks until the tournament is over. So far, I haven’t lost a tournament.”



2nd Lt. Arthur Jacobson
Documentation Center OIC
Joint Military Affairs

“I always have one tee and one golf ball in each pocket when I am golfing.”



Spc. Melanie Walker
Finance Clerk
336th Postal Det.

“When I see a black cat I try to avoid letting it walk in front of me.”

Anyone who would like to send cards to Spc. Crystal Young-Terrell, who was injured in a vehicle

accident, you may do so at the following address:
Walter Reed Hospital
Spc. Crystal Young-Terrell

Room 6815
6900 Georgia Avenue
NW Washington, DC
20307-5001



About the covers: Front, Soldiers from Apache Troop, 104th Cav., inventory their “crop” from the recent Harvest program conducted in MND (N). *Photo by Spc. John Bansemer, 104th Cav.* **Back,** British soldiers unload vehicles from a C-17 cargo plane on Eagle Base for Joint Resolve. *Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Luster.*





**Brig. Gen.
John T. von Trott
Commander
Multinational Division
(North)**

As December unfolds, we find ourselves deep into the holiday season. Our Muslim soldiers celebrate the end of Ramadan with the arrival of the joyful Bayram feast. Jewish soldiers observe the arrival of the seven days of Hanukkah. Christians celebrate Advent and the joyful arrival of Christmas — on the Dec. 25 for western Christians, on Jan. 7 for those who follow the eastern calendar. The point is that for virtually all of us this time of the year carries with it deep religious significance, as well as memories of warm times with families and friends and expect-

tations for the future. It is a time most of us would rather be home than serving here in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

While I certainly cannot and will not attempt to convince you otherwise, let me remind you of the work you are doing here. I do not need to prompt anyone concerning the horrors of the conflict which wracked this country for three full years during the 1990s. You can still see the scars everywhere.

What is less obvious are the scars on men's souls ... the emotional damage suffered by those who lived through the war or the effects of physical deprivation virtually all Bosnians have experienced in the aftermath. You see countless kids in the resettlement camps who have never known any other life. But human nature is tremendously resilient and along with the war's scars you can today witness the rebuilding of Bosnia. It's everywhere — and it's far more than that reconstruction of homes which seems to be so pervasive. It's also the tremendously diffi-

cult process of creating a western market economy out of the ruins of an inefficient communist system. It's continued success in the process of returning people to their pre-war homes. It's the initiation of the rule of law and establishment of incorruptible police and reliable court systems.

All those things are happening — though sometimes not quite at the pace we would prefer. Lord Ashdown, the High Representative and chief executive on the civil side of Dayton, recently called the post-war Bosnian experience a "miracle." What he meant, of course, is that for a country as devastated as this one was to recover to the extent it has in seven short years is indeed a miracle.

Recovery could not have happened and cannot continue without the secure environment, which you and your predecessors have created and maintain every day that you are here. SFOR will not be here forever and the reductions in our manning and structure certainly reflect its successes. Ultimately,

we look to a future where there no longer exists the need for an international peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are not yet at that stage and until we get there, there will be a continuing need for soldiers like you. You are not the first and certainly will not be the last soldiers called upon to spend the holiday season far from homes and families.

So as you negotiate this holiday season here in Bosnia, I hope you will keep foremost in your mind the great work which you are doing and the tremendously positive impact you are having on the lives of so many people. There will be a future here because of your contributions. Your families and friends certainly miss you but also take tremendous pride in your accomplishments.

Along with my warm, personal wishes of Iyi Bayramlar, Happy Hanukkah and Merry Christmas to each of you, let me also add "well done" and extend best wishes for a happy, healthy 2003, marked with your safe return home.

Deer Season in PA

In a recent article released by the Pennsylvania State Game Commission, Dr. Gary Alt, Game Commission Deer Management Section supervisor, said, "We are expecting our total deer harvest to be similar to previous years. However, it will be made up of fewer bucks and more does than usual. We expect the buck harvest to drop from about 200,000 to about 125,000 and we are looking for the antlerless harvest to rise from roughly 300,000 to 375,000."

The Pennsylvania Game Commission has estimated that this year's statewide deer herd numbers about 1.3 million, which is down from 2001's population of 1.4 million. But the herd's size still needs to be trimmed substantially to better balance it with the state's available habitat, which deer depend on for natural food supplies and shelter. That need, which has beset the Commonwealth for many years, when combined with harvest limitations on antlered deer, places Pennsylvania hunters in a unique, and very historic role.



104th Cavalry Apache troopers rake in bountiful crop during 'Harvest'

Sgt. Thomas Farley Jr.

Cavalry Scout, Troop A, 104th Cavalry

It's "Harvest" time in Bosnia, and for the men of Apache Troop, the term "Bag Lady" has suddenly taken on a whole new meaning.

Apache Troop, 1st Squadron, 104th Cavalry is fully engaged in the weapons collection phase of the SFORXII Harvest operation, going door-to-door in the towns and villages scattered throughout the unit's area of responsibility (AOR), just south of the Croatian border. The concept of the operation is to give the population an opportunity to voluntarily surrender illegal and unwanted weapons and munitions.

So far, the "crop" has been surprisingly bountiful and the cooperation of the townspeople has occasionally been astonishing.

"If it's happened once, it's happened a dozen times," explains Spc. Paul Miller. "A little old lady will shuffle down the path from her house with a shopping bag. She'll put it on the ground near the street, make a dismissive gesture with one hand and tell our interpreter she doesn't need this stuff anymore. We'll look into the bag and find a bunch of machine gun ammunition and hand grenades. Amazing! This isn't some partisan warrior who just woke up and

smelled the coffee here. I'm talking about somebody's grandmother."

On reflection, Troop Commander Eric E.L. Guenther Jr., believes the phenomenon makes perfect sense. "Beyond the numbers and necessities, there's a human perspective to peacekeeping. The citizens of Bosnia, by and large, truly want a safe and secure environment for themselves and for their children. Our active Harvest efforts are an important part of what we can do to help them achieve the future they want."

The Harvest now in operation throughout the 104th Cav. area of operation is not the first time the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina have had the opportunity to turn in the deadly detritus left behind from the ethnic conflicts of the 1990s.

Throughout the country, and especially in areas where "ethnic cleansing" was perpetrated with murderous consequences for men, women and children of all the region's cultural traditions, there has been a reluctance to surrender weaponry stashed away in barns, haystacks and basements. "What happens," many citizens wondered, "if the Americans leave? What if the war comes again?"

It may be impossible for the average American to fully grasp the depth and intensity of the trauma suffered by the millions who survived the carnage of this most un-civil war in the Balkans, a conflict in which hundreds of thousands were killed, maimed and driven from their ancestral homes. Clearly, though, the tide of fear is changing.

"Sure, there's still a fringe element that will not only hoard the weapons they have but will also try to acquire more," Guenther said. "But when we factor those zealots out of the equation, we are seeing a gratifying level of cooperation from the people and a significant reduction in the numbers of weapons in the hands of the general population. There's still a long way to go, but I'm satisfied that we're making excellent progress."

Capt. Guenther is delighted but not surprised. "One clear impact of years of active SFOR presence, and the peace that has prevailed as a result, is that all of these illegal weapons have become more of a liability than a means of self-defense." He also



Spc. John Bansemer, Apache Troop, and an SKS rifle which, though not representative of the current state of the war, is in pristine condition. Weapons will be destroyed.

thinks this goes a long way to explain the "bag lady" phenomenon. "One of the most common manifestations of the Harvest we see is the parent — and especially the grandparent — who presents us with a bag full of explosive devices. Simply stated, for them, a safe and secure environment revolves around their children and their grandchildren."

Children have factored into this harvest like the greenness of grass.

In the village of Tolisa, Staff Sgt. Nick Bowden and his squad were pulling duty as the Immediate Reaction Force (IMR), supporting collections in the Orasje opstina, when they were approached by a shy but determined five-year-old named Djuro Dedic. "I have weapons," the boy told the squad's interpreter, Hasan "Hansy" Sakic.

When a dismounted element followed the boy a few hundred meters to his home, he darted inside and soon reappeared with a fearsome arsenal of machine guns, rifles and pistols — all made entirely of plastic.

"This kid had listened to his parents and grandmother talking about the harvest, expressing their hope that it would be successful and that people would turn in all the weapons they'd stockpiled," said Staff Sgt. Bowden. "It was his own idea to turn in his guns to make the village safe, and he



by Spc. John Bansemer

A Polish Airborne EOD team tapes grenades and prepares other munitions for shipment.

was damned proud of his decision.” A few days later, MND (N) Commanding General John von Trott visited the Dedic household and awarded little Djuro the Pennsylvania Commendation Medal, a certificate of appreciation and a SFOR teddy bear.



by Sgt. Thomas Farley Jr.

Polish Airborne Regiment soldier admires the latest firearms technology, is in good luck, regardless of condition.

In Gradacac, Sgt. Peter Cachion was searching for a solution to the problem of distributing posters and flyers promoting the Harvest in this relatively densely populated urban area. In a stroke of genius, he visited the Hasan Kikic High School and asked the principal if his students could help. The principal, Halil Hasanovic, responded enthusiastically.

“It turns out that the students there had performed a similar service for a mine awareness program through a relationship they had with an earlier SFOR rotation,” Cachion said. “They even have an individual assigned to coordinate this kind of activity. For the Harvest operation, it’s a perfect win-win solution.”

“It’s all about relationships,” says Sgt. 1st Class Bevan Cummin, an Apache Troop platoon sergeant. “The success of our efforts – peacekeeping in general and this weapons harvest in particular – rides on our ability to form real relationships with the people of Bosnia, based on mutual respect.”

“How we conduct the Harvest may be just as important as *why* we’re conducting the Harvest,” he explains. “The early results prove to me that the more we assume a strong supporting role, and help the local officials and police take the point, the better the response we can expect from the

local populations.”

Typically, an Apache Troop collection team includes a local policeman, a dismounted trooper, and an interpreter, supported closely but unobtrusively by a fire team in an armored humvee. Nearby, usually at a static collection point, another support team accepts “donations” from drive-up and walk-up “customers,” while an explosive ordinance disposal team stands by, ready to deal with the more hazardous devices and situations that inevitably arise.

“When the local policeman and the interpreter approach the people in their homes, and we assume a relaxed, supporting posture, the citizens are more comfortable and responsive,” Cummin says.

As in every military operation, there are before, during and after components to the weapons Harvest. Capt. Guenther said surveys indicate the “before” phase – informing the population and promoting their participation – has been very successful. “It appears that up to 90 percent of the adults in the areas targeted for collections were aware of the operation and its timing,” he said.

If the “during” phase of the operation continues as it has begun, the net will be record breaking.

It is the “after” phase of the operation that sometimes gets short shrift, according to Cummin. He’s already laying plans to ensure that the final stages of the operation get sufficient attention and effort.

“In my platoon, we’ll be showing our appreciation to the local officials and police by taking them out to dinner and celebrating our collective success,” he said. “Too often, we get so caught up in the tempo of our operations that we shift our focus to the next problem before the book is entirely closed on the first problem. You might say we have a tendency to overlook the importance of a happy ending.”

Capt. Guenther hastens to add that there are several weeks of continuous effort ahead for Apache Troop before the books can be closed with a happy ending for Operation Bountiful Harvest.

“I believe that this operation and the success it seems destined to achieve is yet another indicator that peacekeeping is a mission that National Guardsmen are especially capable of performing,” he said. “Certainly, we are trained to act in the role of professional soldiers, but we remain civilians at heart. We are office workers, policemen, homeowners, and family men. It should come as no surprise that we can empathize with the people we are dealing with here. It is easier for us to overcome the language and cultural barriers. As Sgt. 1st Class Cummin said, ‘it’s all about relationships,’ and good communication is the key to a good relationship.”



by Spc. John Bansemer

Apache Troop Executive Officer 1st Lt. Law Field inspects a mortar collected during harvest operations.

As of Dec. 6, 2002, Apache Troop has amassed the following numbers of various weapons:

Type	Qty
Rifle	72
Light Machine Gun	0
Heavy Machine Gun	0
Pistols/Revolvers	0
Shotguns	1
Mortars	1
Antitank Guns	0
Grenade Launcher	4
Light AT Weapons	12
Rocket Launcher	2
Small arms ammo (<12.7mm)	57,985
Ammo 12.7mm to 20mm	425
Ammo >20mm to 76mm	16
Ammo >76mm	3
Mortar Rounds	12
Artillery rounds	0
AT Land mines	3
AP Land mines	171
Hand grenades	372
Light AT ammo	59
Rifle grenades	66
TNT (grams)	10,000
Fuse	134
Home made ordnance	3
Gun powder (grams)	540
Rocket engine	0
Plastic Explosive (grams)	4,600
Miscellaneous	332

French and American troops promote peace through joint patrol

Story and photos by Spc. Jessica Abner

Assistant editor, 354th MPAD

MILICI, Bosnia and Herzegovina — Every day, soldiers patrol areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of the peacekeeping mission. However, what is usually a routine patrol becomes unique when soldiers from the 109th Inf., participate in a joint patrol with their French counterparts from Multinational Division (Southeast) for the first time in SFOR XII's rotation.

Two patrol teams from Forward Operating Base (FOB) Conner paired up with French Marines, 2nd Infantry Regiment, to familiarize each other with their patrol procedures as part of Exercise Joint Resolve XVII. According to Staff Sgt. Brian Evans, squad leader, the procedures include soldiers working with the locals.

"We will stop to talk to some of the returnees to see if they are set for winter. We'll ask how they are going to get food, and if they are having any problems with the Federation and getting help from them." Evans also said the soldiers ask the local civilians if they know of any weapon supply points or if they have any weapons they want to turn in for the weapons harvest. These are some of the procedures shown to the French Marines.

"The joint patrol with the French, which is part of the Joint Resolve exercise, is to improve our relations so they have a better

understanding of what we do," said Sgt. Vincent Zuranski, assistant team leader. "The basic goal is to provide a safe and secure environment in the local areas in Bosnia."

For some soldiers, the cultural experience reminds them of their days in high school. "It's a good opportunity to train and socialize with service members from other countries. It helps me remember the French I learned in high school, which I never thought I'd use," said Sgt. 1st Class Devin O'Neil, grenadier.

After the troops leave FOB Conner, they convoy to the town of Milici, where they walk the streets on patrol. As they proceed into town, they pass a small basketball court where a group of kids are playing ball. Immediately the group runs over to the soldiers greeting them with smiles and giving the soldiers "high fives."

The locals are familiar with the visitors they pass on the street. "We do have people that we know and talk to regularly," said Spc. Christopher Logue, infantryman. "We take a lot of trips into the hills to return (refugee) villages. We don't always come to just the town here, we also patrol the outlying areas here as well as Zvornik."

Logue also said the joint patrol is a good idea. "It's interesting and I think it's a great opportunity for everybody. We get to exchange ideas and use different equipment while getting to know each other."

Cpl. Thomas Mickel, French infantryman, 2nd Inf. Reg., said he feels the same way. "It is a very good training experience," said Mickel. "We get a better understanding how their equipment works and we exchange ideas about our jobs."

According to Sgt. Bobby George, gunner, the French flack jackets are better than the American version. "They are lighter and provide more protection with the neck and front piece. It also has the accessories included so you don't have to wear the LBE," said George.

After the troops finished the patrol they went back to the convoy where they had a chance to talk about the event. "Everybody was in sync and it worked out perfect. The patrol is really important and I think everybody should be part of a joint patrol to have the opportunity to get to know service members from other countries," said Spc. William Thorton, gunner.

"Everything is going well and we really like it," said Sgt. 1st Class Sebastien Creton, French infantryman, 2nd Inf. Reg. "It was interesting and different because we do not normally go on joint patrols. I enjoyed interacting with the American soldiers."



Sgt. Vincent Zuranski shows the French Marines the patrol route.

Before heading back to FOB Conner, the soldiers took their French counterparts to a soccer field for a game of football with the locals. This gave the soldiers and Marines, a chance to interact with local children, improving relations and maintaining a positive image. According to Thorton, the interaction has many benefits. "We have the chance to hear another language and build friendships. It's good to meet people from other countries that we don't know much about," said Thorton.

The troops learned they had more in common than they originally thought. They have common goals and both contingents enjoy joint patrols. Now, with new ideas and shared views, the soldiers and Marines can incorporate lessons learned into their operating procedures. However, maybe one of the most important lessons taken away is "I learned the French troops were just like us," said Thorton. "They serve their country just like us."



A local child waves to the passing convoy of soldiers.



The joint patrol gave the service members a chance to familiarize themselves with foreign equipment. Spc. Bobby George tries on a flack jacket belonging to Sgt. 1st Class Sebastien Creton, French Marine.

Joint Resolve reinforces SFOR ability

Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Luster

Editor, 354th MPAD

CAMP McGOVERN, Bosnia and Herzegovina — While a cold rain falls and mud forms in every depression, a rowdy crowd of protestors takes the opportunity to set a car ablaze. They are angry and out for blood. With an impending riot on their hands and tempers rising, Stabilization Force soldiers must react quickly.

Italian Carabinieri, soldiers specially trained for riots and crowd control, starts by trying to negotiate with a few of the rioters. When it's clear there will be no negotiating with this crowd, they resort to more physical means. That means working in coordination with other militaries in Multinational Division (North).

"This was very good demonstration," said Col. Antonio Colacicco, commander, Multinational Specialized Unit, who had approximately 100 men here for the exercise. "We have an excellent relationship with MND (N). It's not the first time we've worked together."

Exercise Joint Resolve XXVII takes place over several days in December and involves several nations to include British, French, Italian and American forces. The exercise involves both land and air operations. The operational rehearsals, which occur quarterly, attest to NATO's ability to react

quickly with the necessary forces to reinforce the ongoing peacekeeping operations in the Balkans.

Soldiers from Task Force Saber, Task Force Talon and the Carabinieri worked together to thwart a planned riot and test their ability to react in a crisis situation during the exercise's capstone demonstration event for the media Dec. 4.

With full riot gear including shin guards, helmets, shields, and batons, the Carabinieri rolled into the area in menacing vehicles that had a futuristic armored appearance. As blocks of wood and bottles rained down on the Italians, they moved methodically forward into the oncoming barrage — never wavering. Once in striking distance, smoke grenades and fire extinguishers were used to confuse and disperse the crowd. With the protestors scattering, a large vehicle, which looked much like a van on steroids clad with armor and crash plates, rammed the flaming car to make way for the advancing riot control formation.

As soon as the crowd is pushed from the area, a UH-60 Black Hawk appears over the tree line and races to its drop zone. Carabinieri soldiers "fast rope" from the hovering bird and take up overwatch positions and prepare to clear a building. After throwing a "flash-bang" grenade they enter and remove the threat.

Maj. Doug Smith, aviation liaison officer to the ground



The Carabinieri use an armored van to crash through a car that was set ablaze by protestors.

commander, said the aircraft can be utilized in various ways to elicit certain responses from the crowd. "The response might be psychological or even physical. Aviation capability combined with the ground forces enhances the ability to control a riot situation."

Part of the effectiveness of the exercise is knowing when to call for back-up. Soldiers of Task Force Saber, who were running outer security, were called upon to finish the process due to a casualty suffered by the Carabinieri. Troopers of this cavalry unit have trained in depth for this type of situation.

"We have worked extensively with the Carabinieri over the past several days," said Sgt. 1st Class Rod Rough, platoon sergeant, 3rd platoon, C Troop. "I think what we've done here shows our leadership that we could do this for real, if necessary."

A number of buildings remain in which dangers may lurk — these too must be cleared. Soldiers of C Troop, begin the process by placing a sniper in a position to survey the entire area. In constant communication with one another, the teams inch their way around each corner, prepared for what ever they may encounter.

Platoon leader, 2nd Lt. Timothy Sampson, said his men are trained to pick up where the Carabinieri leave off. "If they take fire, my men will go in and clear the buildings. They will check every room of every building and mark them. They will clear anybody in the buildings — shooters or otherwise."

When all is said and done, the exercise is an overwhelming success and once again proves the ability of Stabilization Forces to react quickly and effectively to situations that may arise anywhere in the theater of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The ultimate goal is to maintain a safe and secure environment, and a future for the people.



Sp. James Johnstone, C Troop, 104th Cav., stands ready as soldiers clear the area.



Cavalry troopers of C Troop, 104th Cav., clear a building during Exercise Joint Resolve.

